

Caring for Vulnerable Populations in Disasters:

All Hazards Approach

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DISCLOSURE

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Learning Objectives

- Define vulnerable population
- Define types of shelters and medical operations
- Identify challenges/communication needs in caring for the vulnerable population in shelters
- Provide steps to address the needs of the vulnerable population in shelters

Learning Objectives

- Discuss the role of the healthcare provider
- List immunization needs for vulnerable populations during a disaster
- Provide resource/referral information

Vulnerable Population

- Used to characterize groups whose needs are not fully addressed by traditional service providers
- Terms used interchangeably “Vulnerable” or “Special needs”
- Individuals who feel they cannot comfortably or safely access and use standard resources offered in disaster preparedness, relief, and recovery

Vulnerable Population

- Goal is to establish partnerships to create stronger, safer and more resilient communities
- State's responsibility is to provide for safety and welfare of its citizens
- Responsible for evacuation and the return
- Preserve life and property
- Understand that we cannot meet all of the needs of in a natural disaster however we can be better prepared to meet the needs

Vulnerable Populations

- Individuals with disabilities (physical or mental)
- Elderly
- Pregnant Women
- Children
- Homeless
- Racial/Ethnic disparities
- Prisons/jails



Vulnerable Populations

- Vietnamese/Spanish Individuals (non-English speaking or limited English)
- Native American Tribes
- Medically/Chemically Dependent
- Any others needing special assistance in high risk areas



Vulnerable Population Statistics

- Harvard School of Public Health published a study indicating that Caucasians (59%) are more likely to evacuate in the event of a government-ordered evacuation than African Americans (73%) and Latino Americans (71%)
- More than 2,000 residents had to be rescued in Galveston after a mandatory evacuation was issued for Hurricane Ike

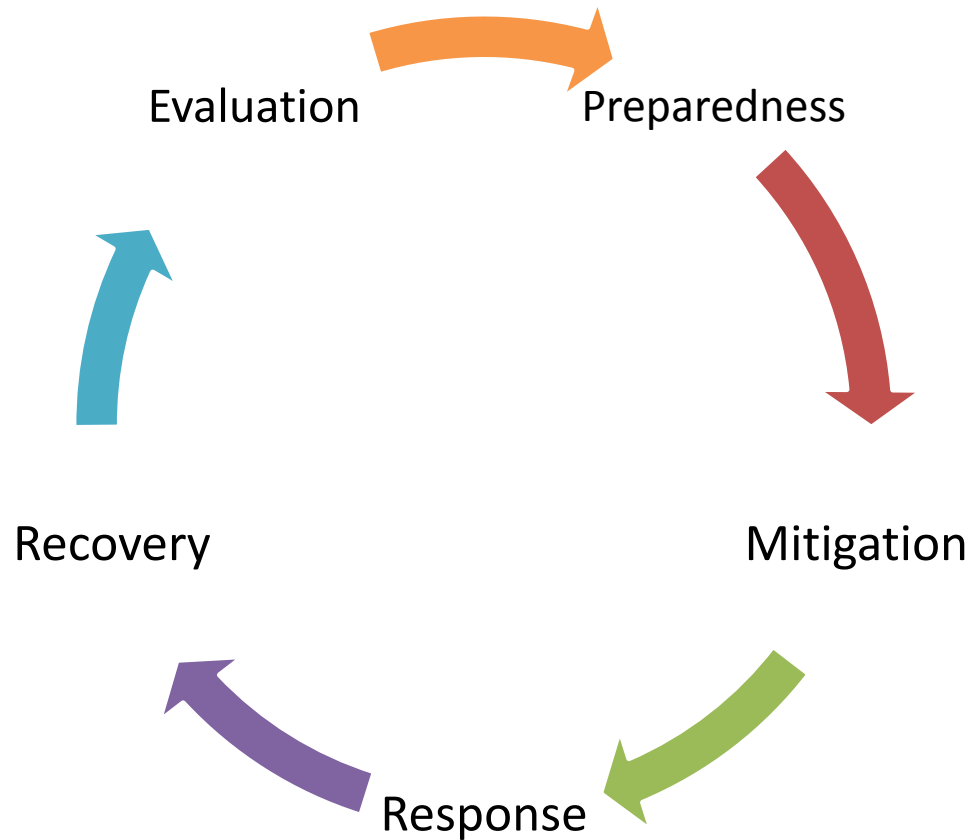
Vulnerable Populations

- Less likely to prepare for a disaster
- More likely to suffer injuries
- More likely to have a psychological trauma
- More likely to face challenges before, during or after disasters
- More likely to die
- Less likely to have transportation to evacuate

Vulnerable Populations

- Language barriers
- Cultural barriers
- Limited resources

Disaster Management Continuum



Disaster Management Continuum

- Preparedness- Proactive planning efforts designed to structure the disaster response before its occurrence.
- Mitigation- Attempts to limit a disaster's impact on human health and community function by taking measures to limit the amount of damage, disability, or loss of life that may occur.

Disaster Management Continuum

- **Response-** Actual implementation of the disaster plan focusing on saving lives, providing first aid, minimizing and restoring damaged systems such as communications and transportation, and providing care and basic life requirements to victims.
- **Recovery-** Focuses on stabilizing and returning the community to its pre-impact status.
- **Evaluation-** Assess the response efforts to the disaster

Louisiana Emergency Operations

Phases of Emergencies

- **Prevention-** Preventive actions taken to avoid an accident or to intervene to stop an incident from occurring.
- **Mitigation-** Actions may be taken to eliminate or reduce the impact of disaster.

Louisiana Emergency Operations

- **Preparedness-** Actions may be taken in advance of an emergency/disaster to develop operational capabilities and help communities respond to and recover from a disaster.
- **Response-** Response actions are taken before, during, or after an emergency/disaster to save lives, minimize damages and enhance recovery operations.

Louisiana Emergency Operations

- **Recovery-** Recovery actions are taken over the short-term to return vital life-support systems to minimum standards and long-term to return life to normal or improved levels.

Types of Disasters

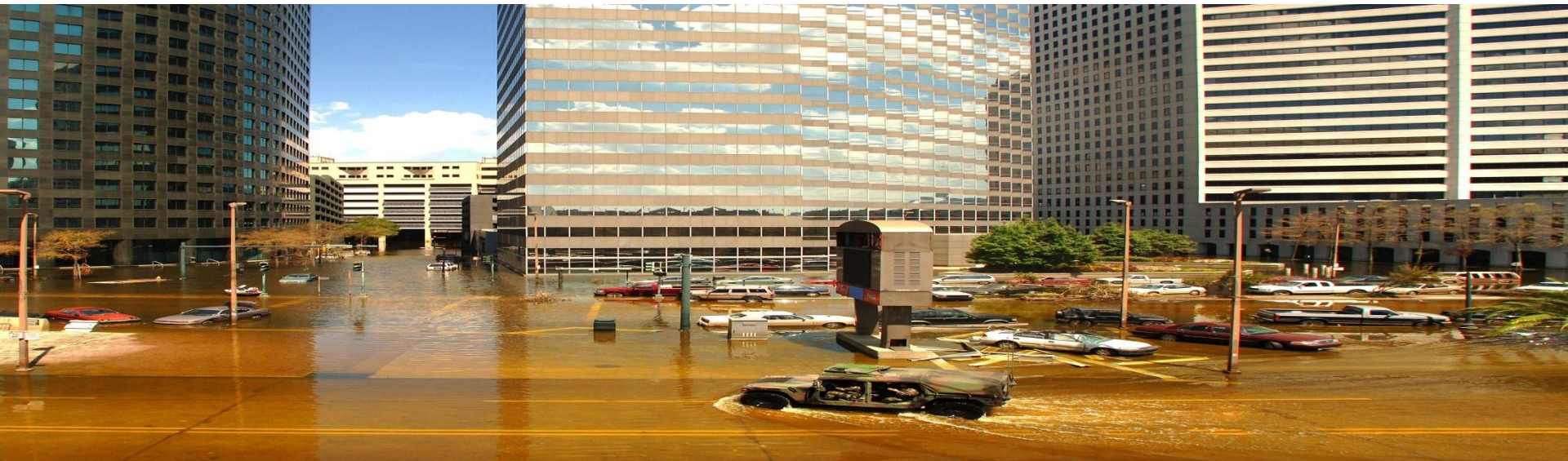
- Natural and Human-Caused

Tornados

Hurricanes

Flooding

Winter storms, Freezes



Types of Disasters



Chemical, Biological, Radiation, Nuclear, and Explosives
Chemical Spills

Types of Disasters



Winter Storm/Blizzard



Louisiana Coast Oil Spill

Types of Disasters



Transportation Accident

Types of Disasters

Pandemic flu

Severe storms

Drought

Water shortages

Hazmat incidents

Resources shortages (utility and energy)



Types of Medical Operations

- Transportation Triage
- Strategic National Stockpile (SNS)
- Point of Dispensing Sites (PODs)

PREPAREDNESS

Types of Medical Special Needs

- Oxygen dependent
- Electrical dependent
- Wound care
- Mobility Impairments (walkers, wheelchairs, canes, crutches, bed bound)
- Visual Impairments
- Hospice clients
- Home Health clients

Types of Medical Special Needs

- Hearing Impairments
- Speech Impairments
- Cognitive Impairments
- Trach Care and Suctioning
- Incontinent
- Behavioral Health Needs
- Special Needs Children



Disability Statistics

- More than 1 in 5 Americans ages 15 and older have some type of disability
- 2008 according to the American Community Survey United States reported an estimate of 12.1% of individuals with disabilities (estimated 36 million-all ages)
- Louisiana reported an estimate of 14.9% with a base population of 4.3 million (estimated 645,000-all ages)

*Statistics provided by Cornell University

Disability Statistics

- According to 2000 Census, ages 5-15 who reported a disability was 5.8% for the US (about 2.6 million)
 - ❑ Louisiana: 7% ages 5-15 (estimated 52,000)
 - ❑ Orleans Parish citizens reported 6, 251
 - ❑ Jefferson Parish citizens reported 5, 027
 - ❑ East Baton Rouge citizens reported 4, 351

Disability Statistics

- According to 2000 Census, ages 16-64 who reported a disability was 9.7% for the US (17.3 million)
 - ❑ Louisiana: 11.9% ages 16-64 (estimated 334,000)
 - ❑ Orleans Parish citizens reported 36, 433
 - ❑ Jefferson Parish citizens reported 30, 887
 - ❑ St. Tammany Parish citizens reported 12, 065
 - ❑ East Baton Rouge Parish citizens reported 26, 642

*Statistics provided by Cornell University

American with Disabilities Act (ADA)

- To provide a clear and comprehensive national mandate for the elimination of discrimination against people with disabilities
- To provide clear, strong, consistent, and enforceable standards that address discrimination against people with disabilities
- Provides a legal framework for local and state government to be responsible for the needs of individuals with disabilities in disaster planning

World Trade Center



World Trade Center

- 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center, man with a mobility impairment was working on the 69th floor and it took 6 hours to evacuate him. No plan was in place.
- 2001 the same man prepared himself to evacuate with the assistance of other coworkers. It took him 1hr and 30 minutes for this evacuation.

World Trade Center

- This individual was better prepared the second attack came in 2001
- He had a plan that involved others within his community of coworkers
- Acquired an evacuation chair

Addressing Needs

- Providing Durable Medical equipment at shelters
- Engage the vulnerable populations and advocate groups in community planning
- Recognize need for pediatric expertise in local disaster planning
- Integrate Community Based Organizations in disaster planning

Addressing Needs

- Ensure that modifications have been made to the environment within the shelter to assist individuals with hearing, sight, and mobility needs
- Provide accessible modes of transportation for individuals with wheelchairs such as paratransit vans



Addressing Needs

- Cultural Competence- The state of being capable of functioning effectively in the context of cultural differences.
 - ☐ Develop a value for diversity
 - ☐ Adapt to diversity
 - ☐ Understand the dynamics of difference



Addressing Needs

- ❑ Understanding the terminology has different interpretations such as “disaster” and “emergency”
- ❑ Immigrants feel that America is their “safe place”
- ❑ Recognize the limit of your own knowledge



Addressing Needs



Challenges/Communication Needs

- Provide telephones with a volume control
- Integrate faith based organizations, radio stations, neighborhood organizations, housing groups, and government agencies in emergency planning to provide communication outreach
- English Language proficiency/Literacy of materials (easier to read)

Challenges/Communication Needs

- Providing emergency preparedness training for medical interpreters



- Provide Braille material/signs

MITIGATION

Care of the Vulnerable Population

- Mitigate all ongoing hazards
- Establish safe shelter
- Provide food and water
- Disease surveillance
- Provide education such as hand washing, personal protective equipment, and other protective measures

RESPONSE

Types of Medical Operations

Types of Shelters

- General Population Shelter
- Critical Transportation Needs Shelter
- Medical Special Needs Shelter
- Federal Medical Station



Challenges/Communication Needs

- Provide signage for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing and need assistance of communication accommodations for PODS and shelters
- Provide videos with open captions and/or written instructions



Challenges/Communication Needs

- Provide white or blackboard displays in shelters
- Pen and Paper
- Use of the Language Line
- Use of communication devices such as cell phones, texting



Challenges/Communication Needs

- Provide pictures/signs (visual/auditory)
- Using color coordination
- Utilization of volunteers/staff to assist with writing information for individuals with hearing disability

Roles of the Healthcare Provider

- Prepare to treat hydration
- Provide wound care treatment
- Prepare to treat respiratory illnesses
- Prepare to treat any foodborne or waterborne illnesses
- Refer ill and injured individuals to hospitals or community health facilities
- Maintain a sanitary environment

Roles of the Healthcare Provider

- Provide resources for obtaining assistance
- Stabilize individuals during a disaster until surge resources are made available through mobilization of local or federal resources
- Prepare to treat injuries
- Prepare to care for individuals with a variety of behavioral health needs such as depression and severe anxiety

Roles of the Healthcare Provider

- Ensuring individuals receive their essential medications
- Reduce the risk of potential disease outbreaks in shelters
- Prevent and control morbidity and mortality
- Providing services during a disaster such as dialysis centers, ventilatory support, and emergency obstetric care

RECOVERY

Care of the Vulnerable Population

- Continue provision of nursing/medical care
- Continue disease surveillance
- Re-triage and refer individuals to appropriate levels of healthcare facilities
- Monitor long term mental health status
- Ensuring routine health care services that have been disrupted return to the impacted area quickly

Immunization Needs

- In the event of a large scale disaster, clinics/schools/large businesses may need to be established such as PODS to accommodate a large volume of individuals who will require vaccination or antibiotics
- Establish eligibility to receive immunizations
- Identify those individuals who are pregnant, who are ill, or have allergies

Resources and Referrals

- Providing information on food safety
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Plan (SNAP) program
- Water safety/boil advisory
- American Red Cross
- Salvation Army
- United Way

Resources and Referrals

- Girls and Boys Town National Hotline
- National Mental Health Association
- Meals on Wheels Programs
- Family Assistance Centers
- Phone banks and hotlines
- Social Security Office

EVALUATION

Care of the Vulnerable Population

- Evaluate Response Actions
- Debriefing
- Participate in community disaster response actions



Summary/Next Steps

- Assess the needs in caring for the vulnerable population in all hazards
- Assist in preparation, response, and recovery of disasters within in our communities
- Assess your cultural knowledge
- Prepare yourself and your family members

Thanks for your support in
volunteering and attention!



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QUESTIONS



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